

TIME FOR CLASS

— COVID-19 EDITION —

PART 3: THE IMPACT OF 2020 ON INTRODUCTORY FACULTY AND THEIR STUDENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....3

ABOUT THIS SURVEY.....5

HOW THE PANDEMIC HAS ALTERED PEDAGOGY.....6

HOW FACULTY AND STUDENTS FARED THIS FALL.....16

INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT 25

HOW FACULTY “GRADE” THEIR INSTITUTIONS 28

OUR WORK AHEAD..... 32

APPENDIX..... 34

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS..... 36

ABOUT TYTON PARTNERS..... 37

FACULTY STORIES

USING PROJECT-BASED LEARNING FOR ASSESSMENT 8

TEACHING STUDENTS TO BE EFFECTIVE LEARNERS 11

USING COURSEWARE TO ASSESS LEARNING 15

HELPING OVERWHELMED STUDENTS AND ENABLING GROUP WORK..... 21

ADDRESSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND ENGAGING STUDENTS 22

ENLISTING TIME MANAGEMENT TOOLS TO BOLSTER STUDENT SUCCESS..... 24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the vast majority of higher education instructors in the U.S. to remake their courses and rethink how they engage and support students and assess learning. With widespread distribution of vaccines forthcoming, the end of the crisis phase is on the horizon, but the long-term impacts on postsecondary teaching and learning will endure. Faculty and institutions are moving forward permanently altered from a period of increased exposure to new pedagogy and practice, digital tool adoption, and heightened awareness of the racial and socio-economic inequities that need to be addressed in classrooms, at institutions, and the broader educational system.

This is the third and final report in a special series designed to examine the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning in higher education; it serves as a culmination to our two prior installments, *Time for Class – A National Survey of Faculty During COVID-19* and *Time for Class – Planning for a Fall Like No Other*. In this report we focus solely on the experiences of a consistent group of faculty teaching introductory courses, who shared their perspectives with us at three points over the course of the pandemic in 2020. Understanding the experiences of faculty teaching introductory-level courses is important, given the critical role these faculty play in delivering courses that impact student retention and progression. High-enrollment introductory-level English, STEM, and other general education courses serve as gateways to degree paths but often function as gatekeepers: high failure rates in these gateway courses lead to significant dropout rates between the first and second year, and at disproportionately high numbers for poverty-affected and racially minoritized students. The experiences and challenges of faculty teaching these courses are critically important to understand as we consider the near- and long-term impact on equity and access in higher education.

This grand unplanned experiment has prompted fundamental changes that we expect to see persist. Increased exposure to the use of digital learning techniques and tools has the potential to help faculty use these strategies post-pandemic to support student learning and change how their time is used to support students. In addition, the pandemic has brought to light issues that call for long-term strategic responses from institutions, suppliers, and policy-makers so that we can ensure that every student everywhere is able to learn.

KEY INSIGHTS

- **Faculty point to significant and persisting concerns about student equity and success – both within their courses and across their institutions.** They signal an increased urgency in addressing these issues and to do so are changing practice at the course-level and calling for institutions to make changes to address more systemic issues related to support and access. Specifically, faculty are reporting increases to DFWI rates (the percentage of students in a course or program who get a D or F grade, withdraw (“W”) from a course, or whose progress in the course is recorded as incomplete (“I”)). Concerningly, faculty who teach at 2-year institutions and at institutions with higher rates of poverty-affected students served report higher than average DFWI rates¹. When coupled with National Student Clearinghouse data pointing to stark drops in 2-year and first-time enrollment², this widening gap is an urgent call to action for institutions and policy-makers alike.

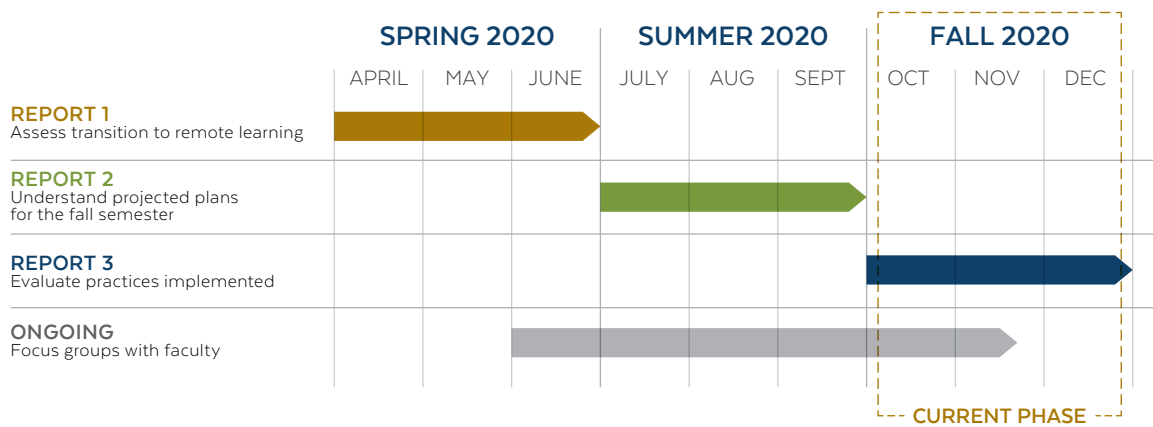
1. As measured by institutions with higher (45%+) percentages of Pell-eligible students

2. National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. (2020, December 17). Current Term Enrollment Estimates: Fall 2020. National Student Clearinghouse, Herndon, VA. https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/CTEE_Report_Fall_2020.pdf

- **Faculty report greater challenges teaching in hybrid and highly-flexible formats relative to fully face-to-face or online formats.** Hybrid and highly flexible formats were heavily used this fall to deliver flexibility for students and have the potential to offer a powerful combination of in-person and digital learning. However, they present unique challenges for faculty to implement, especially for the first time. Faculty teaching in hybrid and highly flexible formats were less likely to report feeling prepared and more likely to report dissatisfaction with student learning outcomes. This underscores the need for more support in designing and delivering high-quality hybrid and highly-flexible courses and additional research on impact and efficacy.
- **Faculty report spending more time across all areas of instruction, and as a result are exhausted; courseware is showing promise in reducing time on certain time-intensive tasks.** Faculty teaching high-enrollment courses (50+) spend significantly more time preparing and teaching courses relative to their peers teaching lower-enrollment courses. There is emerging evidence that courseware can play a role in helping faculty spend time more productively, by reducing time faculty spend on time-intensive tasks, such as grading assignments.
- **The increased exposure to digital learning practices and tools has positively altered faculty perception of online learning and has prompted enduring changes to teaching and learning.** Faculty sentiment about online learning has grown positively throughout the pandemic. Increased exposure to digital tools has enabled faculty to experiment with new and effective practices that they report help struggling students. These include using asynchronous materials, modularizing content and learning outcomes, using digital tools to engage students and foster collaboration, engaging in more frequent and holistic assessment, conducting individualized engagement and outreach to students, and using online proctoring tools.
- **Faculty continue to report that engaging students is their top instructional priority, followed by providing timely feedback, increasing student collaboration, and grading.** Institutions and suppliers should focus on providing instructional design support, case studies, and relevant product capabilities to address these priorities.
- **Institutions are ramping up professional development to support faculty, but it is not entirely effective.** Only 54% of faculty rate the professional development at their institutions as sufficient. For support implementing new pedagogies, practices, and tools, faculty are turning to external professional associations and vendors, which are increasingly important players helping faculty to implement approaches that can drive change at scale.
- **Digital learning infrastructure matters and is harder for smaller and more resource-constrained institutions to invest in.** At institutions where faculty reported “sufficient” professional development, 89% of faculty reported feeling prepared to teach a high quality course this fall, vs. 36% at institutions with “insufficient” professional development. This underscores the importance of institutional infrastructure and support. However, the economic environment is forcing many institutions to navigate uncertain and declining institutional budgets while attempting to make sustained investments in digital transformation. Enduring change in pedagogy and practice requires institutional infrastructure and support, thus academic transformation and institutional transformation must be considered equally.

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Since March, Tyton Partners, in collaboration with Every Learner Everywhere and its partners, has been monitoring the faculty experience and impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning through a series of surveys and focus groups. Surveys of faculty were fielded in May, August, and November 2020, and ongoing faculty focus groups and interviews have enabled a more nuanced understanding of the continued impact of the pandemic on faculty, students, and institutions. More than 8,395 unique faculty from 1,933 institutions have shared their experience at some point throughout this data collection effort. All three surveys targeted a nationally representative sample of faculty at 2-year and 4-year institutions and this work has yielded the largest and most comprehensive view of the impact of the COVID-19 transition on faculty and their teaching to date.

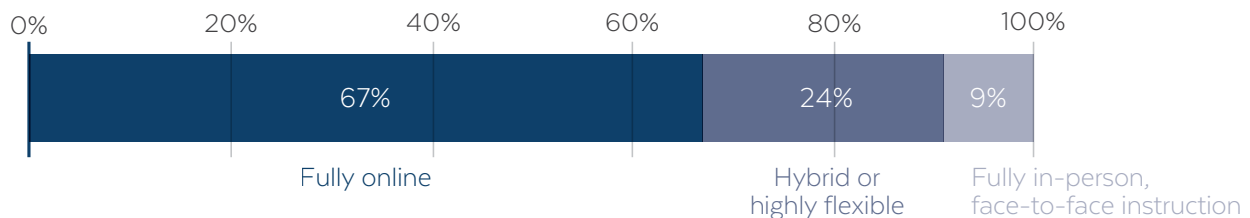


The focus of this third and final report is on a subset of 852 faculty who teach introductory-level courses and represent more than 600 institutions. These faculty shared their experiences at each data collection point, enabling a unique and deep understanding of the evolution of their experiences over the course of the pandemic. Of the 852 faculty in our longitudinal panel, 37% work at 2-year institutions and 63% at 4-year institutions. 16 faculty also shared their experiences more fully as part of focus groups or interviews. Further information on survey methodology and respondent demographics can be found in the methodology section.

HOW THE PANDEMIC HAS ALTERED PEDAGOGY

This fall over 90% of faculty who taught introductory courses reported that they delivered them in an online or hybrid format, a steep departure from the 80% of introductory courses that have historically been taught in person. 67% of faculty taught fully online, 24% taught hybrid or highly flexible, and only 9% taught fully in-person or face-to-face. During the fall term, 22% of introductory faculty reported making a mid-term planned or unplanned change to the modality of their course, primarily to an online, hybrid or highly flexible experience.

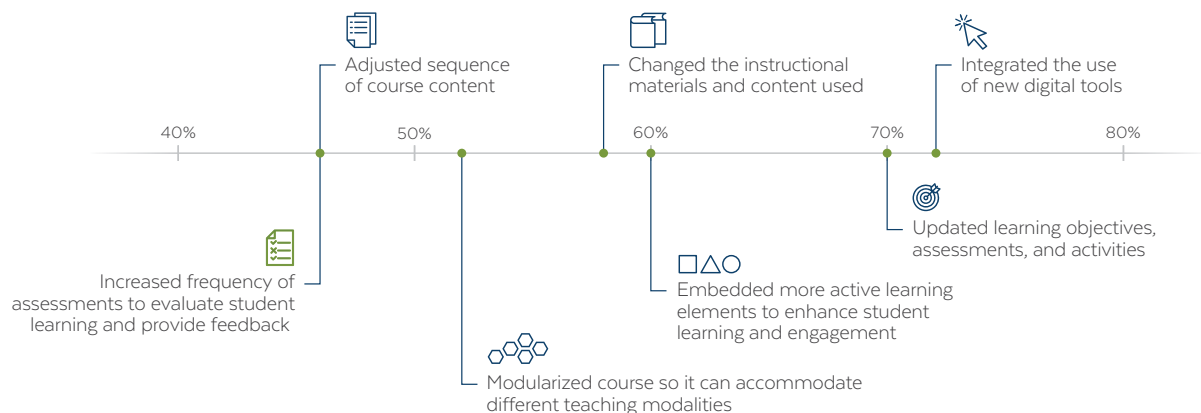
MODALITY AT START OF FALL TERM



Survey question: "Which of the following modalities did you use at the start of the term in your highest enrollment course this fall?" N=852

As a result of the new delivery modalities prompted by the pandemic, faculty made significant modifications to introductory-level courses taught during the fall term. Most notably, 72% of instructors integrated new digital tools; 70% updated learning objectives, assessments, and activities; and 60% embedded active-learning components between March and November. Nearly half (46%) increased the frequency of assessments to more closely track student learning. While many faculty thoughtfully changed their courses this fall to support their students in key ways that show evidence of persisting, not all of these efforts are scalable as implemented, as shown by the strain on and challenge for faculty time and bandwidth.

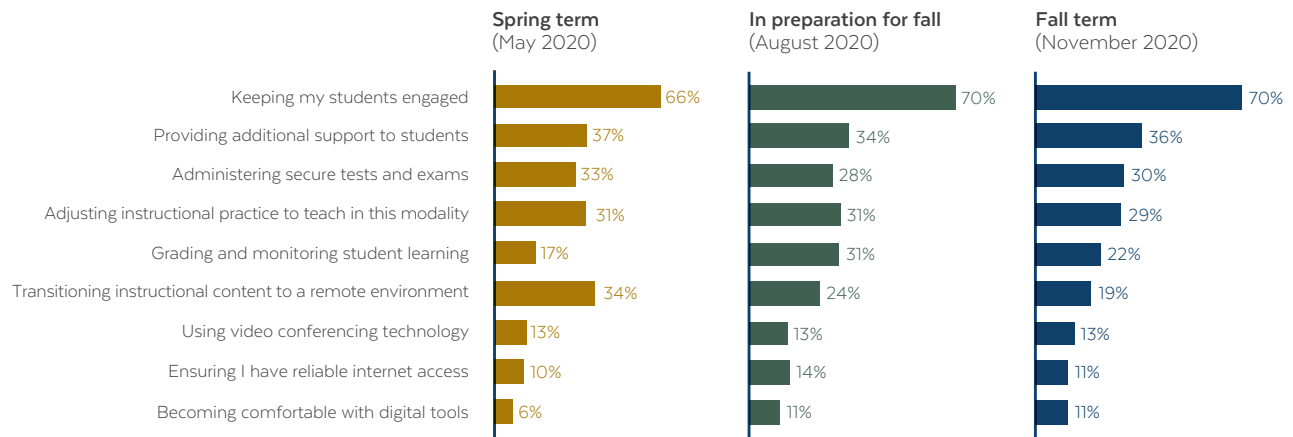
COURSE MODIFICATIONS TO HIGHEST-ENROLLMENT COURSE



Survey question: "What describes the process you undertook to modify this course [in preparation] for the fall term? Please select all that apply." N = 852

Faculty faced specific challenges this fall that they sought to address via their modifications. 70% cite “keeping my students engaged” as a key challenge, 36% citing “providing additional support to students,” and 30% citing “administering secure tests and exams.” Activities related to preparing courses have declined as challenges, with one exception, “adjusting instructional practice” to teach in different modalities remains a challenge for 29% of faculty.

TOP FACULTY CHALLENGES IN INTRODUCTORY COURSES



*Removed “Selecting new digital resources,” “Accessing instructional design resources,” and “Access to my own hardware,” which less than 6% of respondents chose each survey; May survey question: “What was most challenging for your transition to teaching remotely? Please choose up to three.” N = 852; August survey question: “What do you anticipate will be most challenging for your teaching this fall? Please choose up to three.” N = 852; November survey question: “In your highest enrollment course, which of the following teaching and learning challenges were most acute for you this fall? Please choose up to three.” N = 836

After a mostly asynchronous spring (44%), most faculty shifted more towards synchronous (38%) and combination (33%) (a blend of synchronous and asynchronous) instruction for the fall term. Some faculty noted the powerful impact well-planned asynchronous methods have had on students, with one instructor teaching introductory STEM courses noting, **“My institution undervalues how vital asynchronous remote learning options are for equity and student success. Removing both geography and time (allowing asynchronous options) clearly reduces the equity gap and improves student success. I have been pushing to continue remote teaching after the pandemic, but my department abruptly reversed course and is now requiring synchronized (virtual) courses this coming spring. I am so disappointed. It is clear in my sections (I have had 5 of 75 students drop) and everyone is passing. In a F2F section, I’d have at least three times the drops and significantly more students not passing. And it would be my black and brown students that would fare worse in the F2F and now, everybody stays.”**



FACULTY STORY: USING PROJECT-BASED LEARNING FOR ASSESSMENT



Todd Burus, *Lecturer, Mathematics & Statistics*
Eastern Kentucky University

With students not returning after the Thanksgiving break, Todd Burus knew he would have to administer final exams remotely. The institution ran into challenges with the proctoring software they were using in the spring, and Burus was not confident the issues had been fully addressed. ***“It is not built to handle the capacity we are working with,”*** he says.

Solutions: *Embraced project-based finals*

To work around the proctoring challenge, he created a project-based final for his survey mathematics course and a case study for statistics. They are comprehensive and force students to think through all the material in the course in an analytical way. Students submit the final product through SafeAssign in Blackboard, and the projects themselves are simulation-based, so the students receive random data, minimizing the chance of similarities between final results. He took a similar approach over the summer, and he says, ***“It worked really well.”***

Going forward: *Sticking with project-based work*






Burus has been so pleased with the project-based approach to finals that he is leaning toward keeping them that way even when in-person proctoring is an option again. More broadly, he has been reminded of how useful case studies can be in both driving and assessing comprehension. ***“They force students to bring concepts together in ways that single problem sets and exams simply cannot.”***



Many instructors reported that pandemic-prompted changes to their teaching will continue after the return of face-to-face learning because of clear benefits to student learning

Several instructors described pushing the boundaries of their skills, pedagogical experience, and personal time in order to engage students and ensure comprehension of course content. Many reported these changes to their practice will continue after the return of face-to-face learning.

IN SUM: THE PANDEMIC’S IMPACT ON PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICES THAT WILL PERSIST

	Practices that will Persist post-Pandemic	Potential Impact on Faculty	Potential Impact on Students
	Use of asynchronous, pre-recorded materials	Faculty use class time to engage students actively in their learning	Enables students to access content flexibly and reduces barriers to participation
	Increased modularization of content and learning outcomes	Enables faculty to more easily and efficiently adjust courses based on student learning	Gives students increased visibility into learning outcomes and what they need to learn
	More frequent and formative assessment	Provides insight on student comprehension that can be used to adjust instruction and identify students who need support	Gives students increased visibility into mastery and what they still need to learn
	Use of digital tools to engage students, foster collaboration, and assess learning	Facilitates interactions that yield more frequent, observable evidence of learning	Provides students with ability to actively engage in learning both inside and outside of class sessions and in flexible formats
	Targeted and individualized outreach and support to students who need it	Done without tools and support, this has potential to take significant faculty time	Provides students with encouragement and help-seeking support

Many faculty noted that the pandemic forced them to rethink how to use limited class time and use a flipped classroom approach to focus on engaging students as active learners, answering questions and giving feedback. Reflecting a similar experience shared by other faculty, when asked what change was most effective that you will continue, an introductory English instructor at a 4-year institution said, ***“The biggest change I made was using a flipped classroom approach—putting all lecture-based and reading materials online, and then spending our “live” time with discussions.”***

Faculty noted that the use of asynchronous content was important to meet the reality of students’ lives. A developmental math instructor at a 2-year institution reported: ***“One change that I made was I recorded myself teaching every single topic in my course with full recorded lectures. This has a positive impact because my students can watch the videos when they are most focused (when kids are sleeping, no work, etc.). When school returns in person, I will still have my videos, and when a student is absent, they will now be able to stay caught up through watching the video of me teaching the topic.”*** An introductory English instructor at a 2-year school noted: ***“Synchronous teaching in the spring created too many barriers for students who had responsibilities to family and jobs (many of which came and went) and school. Flexibility for my students right now has been key.”***

Faculty also described how they made time to support students. *“I am offering one-on-one meeting times for students based on their schedule. They only need to email me at least one night in advance and give me two different times to choose from. The students who have struggled find this very helpful, but it is very time consuming,”* said an introductory math instructor at a 2-year institution, whose response hints that it may not be possible to continue the practice indefinitely. An introductory communications instructor at a 4-year institution found virtual office hours more useful and efficient than the in-person variety: *“By necessity, I have been holding virtual office hours. Compared to traditional in-person office hours, these sessions have enabled greater access and utilization of office hours for students. The virtual office hours are also more productive as we can share screens and work collaboratively on their assignments in ways not possible in the traditional format. I will be continuing this practice post-pandemic.”* However, while faculty reported that this was important, they also generally reported it was highly time consuming and unsustainable, pointing to the importance of using various methods to ensure that faculty can identify and prioritize outreach to struggling students.

Many faculty incorporated course elements that promoted more frequent and holistic assessment. Some faculty built frequent learner-response components into their classes in order to evaluate student understanding in an ongoing, low-stakes way. *“Students submitted written responses to every reading, and while it was time-consuming to read and respond to their work on a daily basis, it allowed me to monitor their engagement and individualize instruction to a certain extent,”* said an introductory English instructor at a 4-year institution. In a similar vein, two introductory math instructors at 4-year institutions explained how they modified their assessment methods—in one case, by *“eliminating high-stakes testing in favor of frequent low-stakes, repeatable quizzes graded for mastery, not partial credit,”* and in the other, by *“using a majority of mastery-based exams. Students have to earn at least 80% and can retake different versions until they have demonstrated understanding of the concepts.”*

Other faculty enlisted digital tools to create new ways to engage students. One first-year seminar instructor at a 4-year institution observed that certain online students *“were not as comfortable talking out loud in class, so I started using Nearpod (a tool to assess student comprehension) more, which gives everyone a chance to share their thinking but only for me to see, and then I can anonymously share answers to discuss.”* Another seminar instructor at a 4-year institution searched for a discussion platform that would enable maximum flexibility in class conversations: *“I moved away from using the Blackboard LMS discussion board and opted for a more friendly service via Slack. This made all the difference in the world for the students to interact with each other in a more real-time friendly way, interact with me, have robust discussions, tag each other in posts and replies, share links, etc. It was an excellent service/tool to use in combination with my regular use of Blackboard and Zoom.”*

FACULTY STORY: TEACHING STUDENTS TO BE EFFECTIVE LEARNERS



KaSai Un, *Assistant Professor, Mathematics*
Texas A&M University-Commerce

KaSai Un's institution decided that first-year mathematics courses needed to be offered in person but gave students the option to attend from home. That means she is teaching in a highly flexible format with both in-class and remote students in mind. **"The workload is much heavier with courses being prepared for both in-person and remote students,"** she says. **"This term I have stayed at my office post-midnight many nights; it is a lot of work."**

More importantly, Un is concerned that many students opting to attend from home—about a third are doing so—are not keeping up with the lessons. **"Before this change, attendance used to be much better,"** she says. **"Students are not as engaged."**

A number of her students also are not accustomed to using the technology in the course and consistently have challenges submitting assignments (which they must do by uploading a PDF) as well as taking remotely proctored exams. **"Secured testing remains one of the biggest challenges,"** she says.

Solutions: *Created more bite-sized content, worked hard to familiarize students with digital tools and create accommodations, and conducted more personal outreach*

In addition to recording her full lectures, Un created a series of shorter videos focused on specific concepts that she makes available through the learning management system. She is worked hard to familiarize students with the online homework tool, MyLab, which her courses have also used in the past. The tool shows student attempts and completion, which allows her to reach out to students who may need extra support. The system allows for automatic messaging, but she has found that her students respond better to personalized emails.

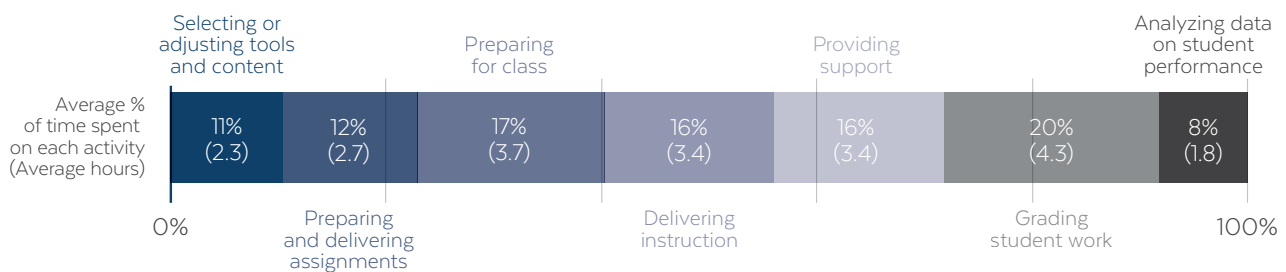
Going forward: *Helping students learn to be learners*

Un is worried that students are falling behind because it is harder to casually monitor their participation, note-taking, and other study habits when they are not in class or otherwise meeting with her face to face. For next term, she is considering requiring remote students to upload their notes, and complete weekly quizzes, so she can get a better sense of how they are organizing and processing the material. **"I am still trying to find the best way to actively engage my remote students in the course."**

The work of adapting to the pandemic has taken significant time. Faculty spent an average of 14 hours per week on their highest-enrollment course, and they estimated that most of that time was devoted to grading student work (20%), preparing for class (17%), providing support (16%), and delivering instruction (16%). There are notable factors that contributed to increased faculty time:

- Large introductory courses take more time: faculty with a class of more than 50 students spent an estimated 16.6 hours per week on teaching tasks compared to 13.3 hours per week for those teaching classes of fewer than 50.
- Asynchronous teaching takes slightly more time than primarily synchronous, faculty who teach primarily asynchronously reporting an average of 14.8 hours on teaching tasks compared to 13.3 hours for those who teach synchronously.

DISTRIBUTION OF FACULTY TIME



Survey question: "On average, how many hours do you allocate each week for each of the following activities in this course [highest-enrollment course]?" N=847

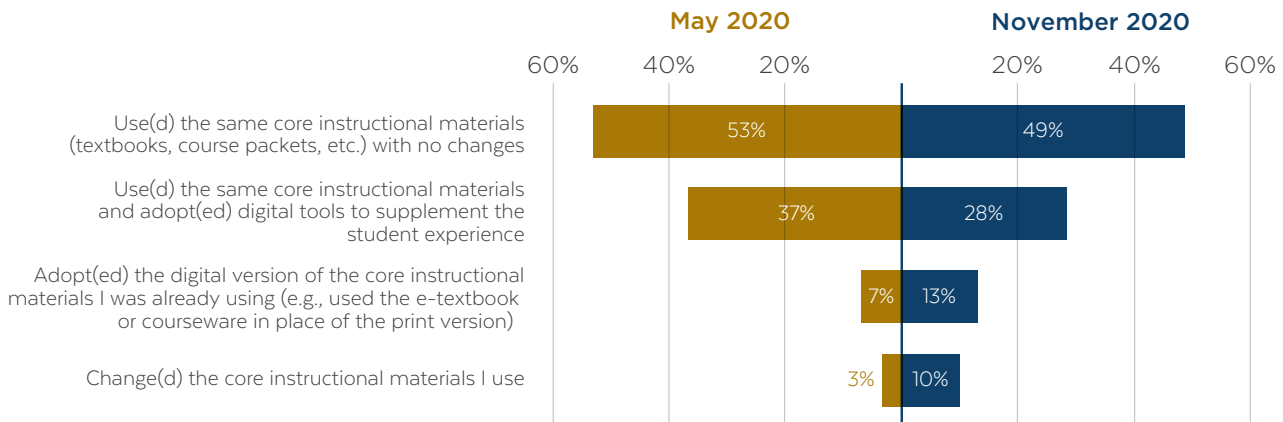
Throughout faculty focus groups and interviews, we repeatedly heard concerns that the strategies that faculty were deploying with positive results to support students and their learning this term were not sustainable. One introductory English instructor at a 2-year institution noted, **"The most effective thing I did this past term was staying up all night to respond to student emails as soon as they came in."** However, analysis of faculty time and digital tool usage suggests that, digital tools, when implemented well, have the potential to enable faculty to prioritize student outreach and streamline assessment. For example, there is emerging evidence that courseware³ can reduce time on some tasks. Courseware use has a small but statistically significant impact on the reduction of grading time. Users spend an average of 4.1 hours a week grading student work, while those who do not use courseware spend 4.5 hours.

Faculty increasingly relied on third-party partners as well as they engaged in these massive redesign efforts. Said an introductory biology instructor, **"Fall 2020 will be a semester to remember, because of the many changes that I have undergone as an instructor. I have learned how to truly use what I have with my learning platform, book company, and other college resources to ensure that my students are engaging in the course itself as much as possible."** The pandemic has prompted increases that were already occurring in digital instructional materials and tools adoption to accelerate, much of which we expect to persist.

3. Courseware is defined as instructional content that is scoped and sequenced to support delivery of an entire course through software built specifically for educational purposes

The pandemic did not prompt huge shifts in core materials adoption, instead driving the adoption of digital tools to supplement core content, with 37% of May respondents and 28% of November respondents reporting that they had adopted digital tools to enhance the student experience. A further 7% and 13% respectively began using the digital versions of their established core materials. Only 3% and 10% changed their core instructional materials.

ADJUSTMENT TO CORE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS



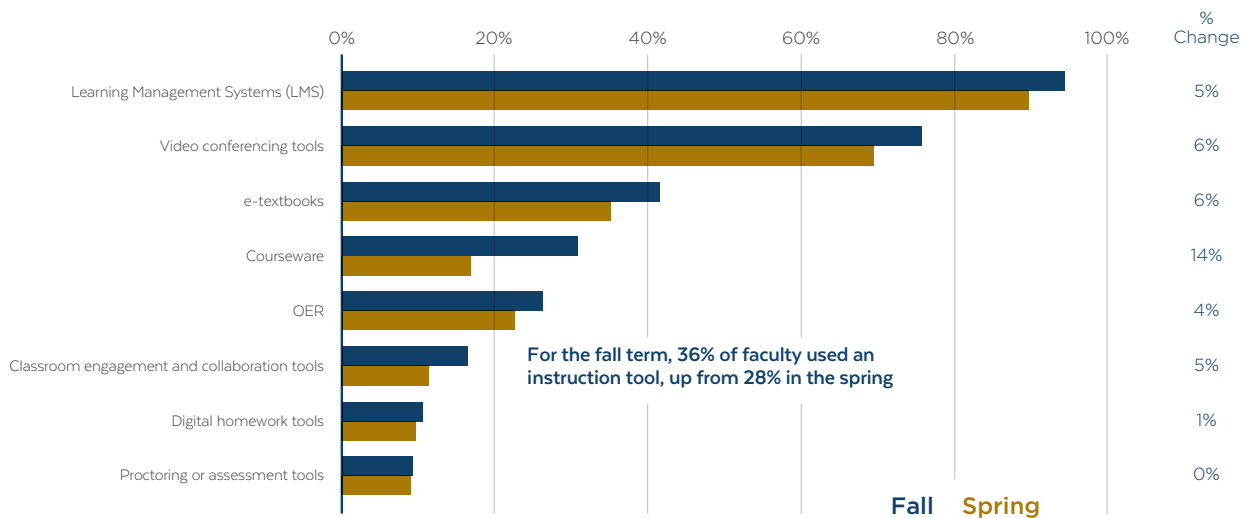
Survey question: "What adjustments, if any, have you made or are you making to the instructional materials used in your course?"
 May N = 852, November N = 800



The pandemic has accelerated the shift to digital course materials and prompted increasing use of digital teaching tools and practice

Learning Management System (LMS) and video-conferencing tools were the most broadly used tools during the pandemic. However, between the spring and fall term, courseware was the category that saw the largest increase, rising 14 percentage points from the spring to the fall term. The use of instructional tools (e.g., assessment, homework, and engagement and collaboration tools) increased from 28% to 36%. In discussions, some faculty noted that electronic books and courseware have also provided major efficiencies and benefits to students that have been especially critical in a condensed term. **"Students are in there day one and have access to the materials they need,"** said an instructor teaching introductory math and statistics at a 4-year institution.

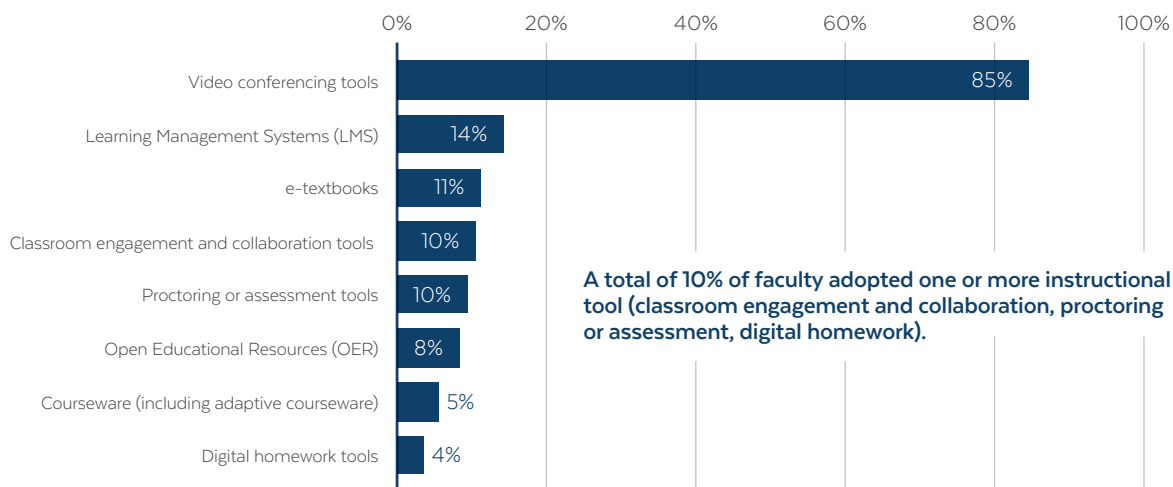
TOOLS USED DURING THE FALL AND SPRING TERMS



May survey question: "Which of the following tools or resources did you use in your transition to remote learning? Please select all that apply." N = 852; November survey question: "Which of the following tools or resources did you use in your course this fall? Please select all that apply." N = 837

Over the course of the year, videoconferencing tools experienced by far the greatest exposure to new adopters, with 85% of introductory faculty reporting first-time use. While at lower rates than the massive exposure of conferencing tools, several other categories experienced exposure to more than 10% of the introductory faculty population. For LMS, the percentage was 14%; for e-textbooks, 11%; and for classroom engagement, collaboration, proctoring, and assessment tools, 10%, combined.

PERCENT OF FACULTY USING TOOL FOR THE FIRST TIME DUE TO COVID-19



May and November survey question: "Which of the following tools or resources did you use for the first time this term? Please select all that apply." N = 852

Across each of these tool categories, faculty reported high levels of satisfaction, indicating that this uptick in adoption will likely persist as faculty permanently incorporate these tools and practices into their work.

FACULTY STORY: USING COURSEWARE TO ASSESS LEARNING



Jason McAfee, *Senior Lecturer, Chemistry*
University of North Texas

Jason McAfee was already employing a lot of digital tools: his homework and reading assignments had been online for years, and he regularly uses courseware to pull those together. He still lectures synchronously and got two cameras to accommodate his high-energy style: one trained on him and the other on a whiteboard where he demonstrates formulas and concepts.

Despite that, though, it is harder in a remote environment to sense whether students are following along. ***“You do not get student reactions,”*** he says. ***“It is harder to get answers from students now than when it was face-to-face.”*** Moreover, while students can follow what he is writing, there is not a good way to show him their work in real time, and McAfee worries that that allows misunderstandings of the material and foundational principles to go unnoticed. When they began more complicated material after about two months, more students than usual started to struggle. ***“All of a sudden, I am fielding more questions than before during office hours,”*** he says.

Solutions: *Bite-sized course material, low-stakes testing, and a redesigned recitation*

Pre-COVID, McAfee started using McGraw-Hill ALEKS, a courseware product. To ensure students are not missing key concepts, he has adjusted his use of the assignments and learning objectives. Students have an ALEKS assignment every Tuesday and Saturday, and a McGraw-Hill SmartBook assignment every Monday and Wednesday, for his courses that meet Tuesdays and Thursdays. He has found that giving a short quiz after the reading boosts student performance. ***“I try to put together things I think good students would do, like actually read the assigned sections from the textbook before class and do a bit of homework every day after class, and I find a way to attach a grade to those things,”*** he says.

McAfee also devised a system for his recitations that has worked relatively well—students begin class taking a quiz and then he releases a PDF of the quiz. Students transition to Zoom rooms that teaching assistants monitor, where they work through the quiz together. Once they have figured out all the problems, they meet with him briefly in the main room and can leave for the day. ***“This is an example of frequent, low-stakes quizzing. The students can earn half the points for answering the quiz questions correct, but they must work in their groups to earn the other half of the points for that week’s recitation.”***

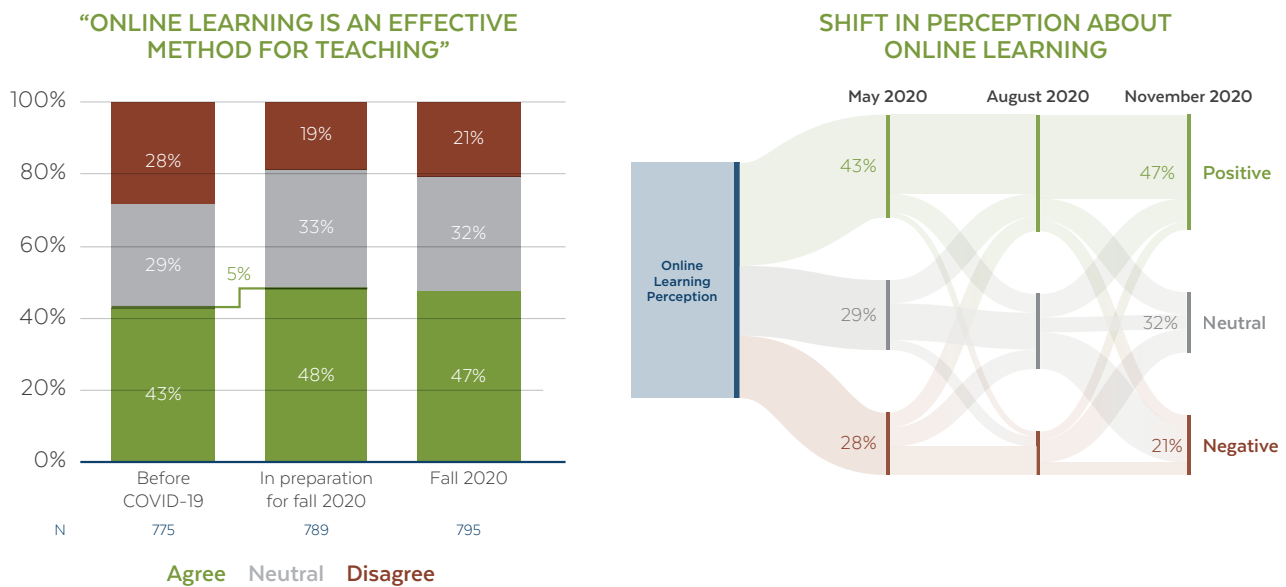
Going forward: *Keep using the tools*

When asked about what he might adjust when things return to normal, McAfee says, ***“I’ve been using these tools in these ways for 2 full years now. Why change what works? The only thing I will change is moving all my direct interactions with my students back to face-to-face. I miss seeing them and their expressions and knowing when they are following and when they are lost.”***

HOW FACULTY AND STUDENTS FARED THIS FALL

After increases in positive sentiment between May and August, introductory faculty attitudes toward online learning have stabilized. The pandemic contributed to positive movement in attitudes about online as an effective teaching method, and as of November, almost half of the introductory faculty population reported positive sentiment towards online. However, when the shifts in perception over time are unpacked with more nuance, as in the chart below right, a few things become clear. Notably, many of the faculty who were initially negative transitioned to more neutral and positive sentiment. However, a portion of faculty who started out neutral ended up feeling more negative about online education. While there is no single causal factor that emerged in our analysis of these shifts, several factors were more present in the experiences of those who shifted more positively. These included self-reported prior experience as an experienced user of digital tools and a positive perception of pre-pandemic levels of professional development and institutional support for digital learning. Those who shifted more negatively were video-conference users at higher rates, perhaps a proxy for the fact that those faculty relying on video-conferencing tools did not fully embrace a broader range of digital teaching strategies and tools. It is worth noting that as we look across this and other outcome variables related to faculty perception of student learning and course quality, we consistently find that course-level, institutional support factors, and individual faculty attitudes all matter⁴. This emphasizes the holistic approach needed to engage in online learning that is high quality and effective.

FACULTY SENTIMENT ABOUT ONLINE LEARNING



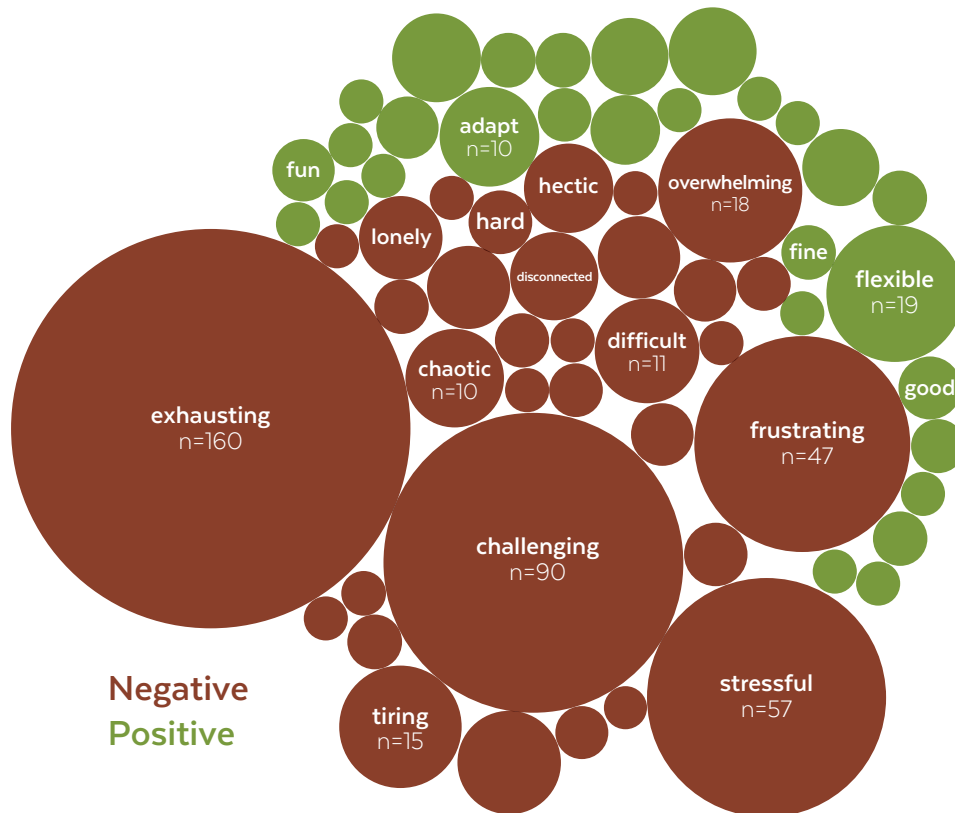
May survey question: “Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [Online learning is an effective method for teaching]?”; August and November survey question: “As of today, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [Online learning is an effective method for teaching]?”

Note: For our full survey population, belief that online is an effective method for teaching increased from 39% of the population pre-COVID to 49% during the summer and into the fall. This information was collected from a representative sample of individuals but not from the same individuals over each time point.

4. Tyton Partners and Bay View Analytics. (July 2020). Time for Class 2020: Context and Implementation Matter in the Use of Courseware. Every Learner Everywhere. <https://www.everylearnereverywhere.org/resources/time-for-class-2020>

Some reservations about online learning come from the stress faculty have faced from continued course adjustment and transitions we've documented throughout this report and series. Faculty were asked to name one word that best described the fall of 2020, and the collective sentiments shared were far more negative than positive: *exhausting*, *challenging*, *stressful*, and *frustrating* were the top words cited.

INTRODUCTORY FACULTY ONE-WORD DESCRIPTION OF THEIR EXPERIENCE TEACHING THIS FALL



Survey question: "What is the one word you would use to describe your experience teaching this term?" N = 813

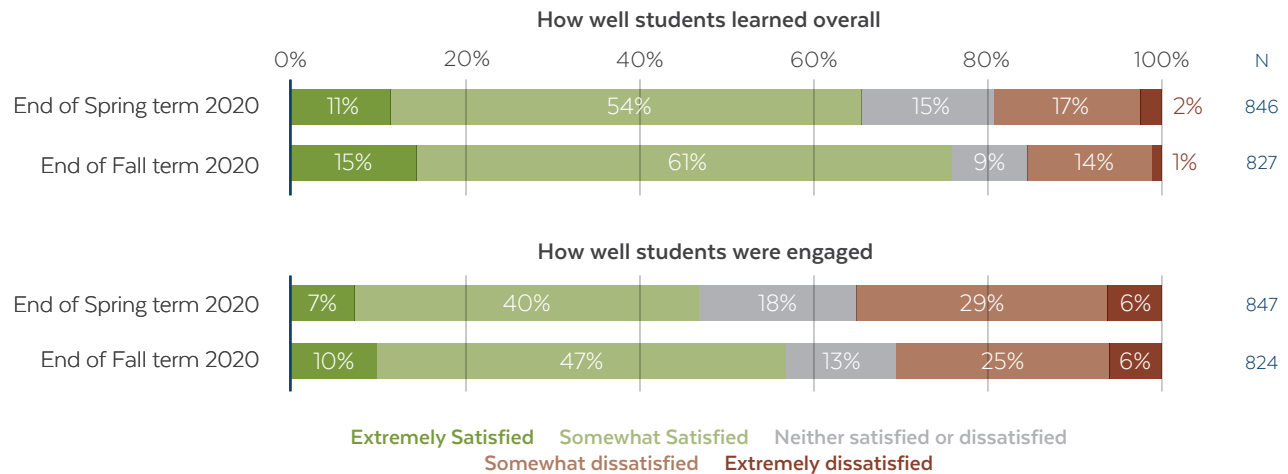


"The most effective thing I did this past term was staying up all night to respond to student emails as soon as they came in."

-Introductory English Instructor, 2-year institution

The sum of these efforts to modify courses had an impact: faculty reported higher satisfaction with student learning outcomes and engagement this fall relative to the spring, with 65% of respondents reporting they were either somewhat or extremely satisfied with outcomes in the spring term compared to 76% for the fall term. Modality made a difference; faculty teaching fully online were more satisfied overall than those teaching hybrid courses with how students learned, 77% vs. 65%. Fully online faculty were also more satisfied with student engagement, with 60% reporting satisfaction compared to 46% for those teaching hybrid courses, 50% for highly flexible, and 52% for in person.

SATISFACTION WITH STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ENGAGEMENT

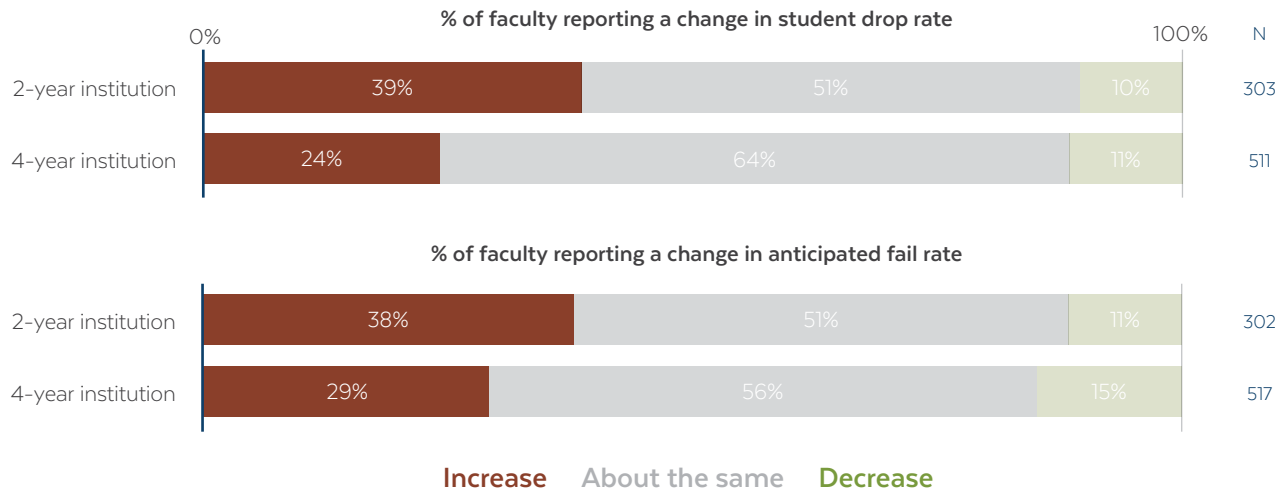


May survey question: "How satisfied were you with the way your class turned out across the following dimensions after the transition to remote learning?"; November survey question: "How satisfied are you with the way your highest-enrollment course has turned out across the following dimensions?"

The inability to provide hands-on laboratory classes as well as guided instruction and practice on concepts created particular obstacles for faculty in math and sciences courses. Faculty teaching introductory math and physical sciences courses reported lower satisfaction with student engagement in their highest-enrollment courses compared to faculty teaching humanities, 51% vs. 63%.

However, in stark contradiction to their relatively high rates of self-reported preparation for the fall, faculty report acute concerns about student success, as measured by course drop and withdrawal and failure rates. These concerns are most acute at 2-year institutions. Faculty report that an increasing number of students dropped or withdrew from introductory courses this fall. 24% of 4-year faculty and 39% of 2-year faculty report that they are seeing an increase in their course drop or withdrawal rate. They also report an increase in the failure rate. 29% of faculty at 4-year and 38% of faculty at 2-year institutions are reporting an increase in failure rates.

PERCENT OF FACULTY REPORTING CHANGES TO DROP AND FAILURE RATES



*Based on faculty assessment for their highest-enrollment course; survey questions: “Compared to when you have taught this high-enrollment course in the past, how did the percentage of students who dropped or withdrew the class change this fall term?”; “Compared to when you have taught this high-enrollment course in the past, how do you anticipate the percentage of students who will fail the class to change this fall term?”

Faculty most concerned about failure and drop rates included those teaching at institutions with greater rates of poverty-affected students.⁵ 38% of faculty at institutions with high rates of Pell-eligible populations say drop rates increased vs. 28% of faculty at institutions with lower rates of Pell-eligible students.⁶ 40% of faculty at high-Pell eligible institutions report increased fail rates vs. 30% low-Pell eligible. Modality also appeared to matter this term: faculty who taught in hybrid modalities with less than 50% of instruction face-to-face were more likely to report increases in drop and fail rates. Preparation matters as well and, faculty who report feeling prepared at higher rates are less likely to report increases in drop and failure rates.



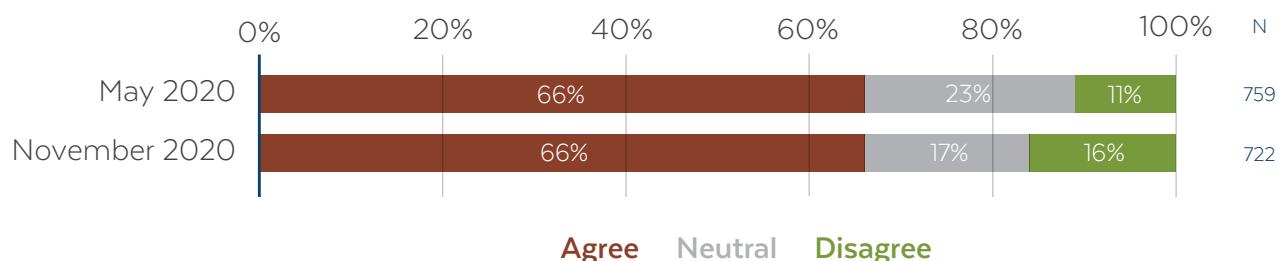
Faculty teaching at institutions with greater rates of poverty-affected students are more likely to report increases in student drop rates and anticipated failure rates - underscoring the urgent call to action to address growing equity gaps being exacerbated by the pandemic

5. Poverty-affected students are defined as those eligible for Pell grants.

6. Institutions with high rates of Pell-eligible students defined as serving 45% or more Pell-eligible students.

Equity issues persist: 66% of introductory faculty indicate that concerns about systemic inequities at their institution are not being adequately addressed, and the rate has held steady since May. Faculty teaching introductory courses expressed concern about the pandemic's disproportionate impact on the education of Black, Latinx, and poverty-affected students. One respondent from a 4-year public institution acknowledged these students' struggles and mentioned their own efforts to address them within the course context: ***"The students having the most trouble are...students from school districts with lower socioeconomic status, which incorporates ethnicity. They worked so hard to get to college and have so much to lose. I must work on being clearer and engaging even before day 1 so they feel welcome and like they can proceed with confidence."*** However, instructors also point to continued systemic challenges, such as students with insufficient internet access, often in rural areas. One instructor from a 2-year institution noted that an unreliable internet connection makes synchronous classes impossible: ***"Many of our students live in rural areas without reliable internet access. While synchronous online courses (via Zoom, etc.) seem to improve attendance and enhance engagement, not all students have the capacity to stream their courses."***

"I AM CONCERNED ABOUT EQUITY GAPS BETWEEN STUDENT GROUPS AT MY INSTITUTION"



May survey question: "As you consider the coming fall term, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [I am concerned about equity gaps between student groups at my institution]?"; November survey question: "How would you characterize your agreement with the statement [I am concerned about equity gaps between student groups at my institution]?"

To address at least some of the issues exacerbated by the pandemic, multiple faculty suggested that institutions provide students with more robust and better-coordinated support services such as advising and tutoring. One instructor from a 2-year institution explicitly called for enhanced student training on the use of online tools: ***"More advertisement of the resources (like tutoring) that are available for students to help. More positive messages about our ability to be successful in this environment. More 21st-century social media outreach to students. More training available to students on how to use the online tools that we make available to them."*** Recognizing the seriousness of the problems many students faced, a respondent from a 4-year institution said, ***"We need more mental health resources on campus. Our students really struggled with an early-start, early-finish semester without breaks, and that, coupled with COVID and personal issues that students encountered, caused more mental health problems than I have ever seen...Faculty need guidance on the kinds of support we should make available (extended time to complete assignments, additional one-on-one support, etc.)."***

FACULTY STORY: HELPING OVERWHELMED STUDENTS AND ENABLING GROUP WORK



James Rudnicky, Instructor, Biology
Thomas Nelson Community College

Like many faculty, James Rudnicky says his students are struggling more with time management in the online environment and generally seem more overwhelmed. He has seen a few students attempt to take much larger course loads because they do not have to show up in person for class and believe they can handle more. He has counseled those students to reduce their loads because “online” does not equal “easier” and has taken a much more hands-on approach to advising.

When it comes to his classes, Rudnicky has found it challenging to incorporate some of his usual practices into an asynchronous environment. For years, he has emphasized active learning and group work in his introduction to biology courses. Hands-on group work helps students process and retain what they are learning, and the groups they form for assigned work provide peer-to-peer support and often evolve into study groups. That peer-to-peer support is especially valuable now, Rudnicky says, as students navigate coursework online and without face-to-face connection to faculty and peers, **“I’m having trouble identifying group activities in an asynchronous environment.”** This is due to students having differing work and family schedules that make meetings difficult to arrange.

Solutions: *Provide clear structure, use technology to drive efficiencies, and create groups early*

To help students manage their workload, he has tried to keep materials centralized—for example, listing all assignments, with opening and due dates, within the syllabus. Links to these assignments are posted in weekly announcements that are automatically emailed to students.

He also puts together short videos that walk students through the activities in a given week, so they know what to expect. For the first four weeks, he used a feature in Canvas, his learning management system, that would automatically send reminders to students about due dates. He found that these tools enable efficiencies in setting up activities and homework assignments. **“Twenty activities and homework assignments were set up in two weeks,”** he says.

A few weeks into the fall, Rudnicky decided to establish learning groups in his classes. **“I hope it serves as a resource of support for students having trouble functioning in an online class,”** he says. Next term, he plans to use student input to form groups at the start of the term so that students have a small peer support network from the get-go.

Going forward: *Stop reinventing the wheel*

Next term and beyond, Rudnicky looks forward to being able to reuse the resources he has put together, freeing up time for more 1:1 engagement with students. He would also like to see his college devote some faculty to primarily developing all content within an online class that all instructors could then use as a starting point and customize.

FACULTY STORY: ADDRESSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND ENGAGING STUDENTS



Elgrie Hurd III, *Full-time Faculty, Psychology & Sociology*
Dallas College at Brookhaven Campus

Elgrie Hurd has always been deeply attuned to concerns about access and equity in higher education. His students at Dallas College at Brookhaven Campus consistently face hurdles on their path to and through college. But the current moment is different. Access has taken on a whole new meaning now that his face-to-face classes have moved online, bringing the digital divide to the forefront. Many students are accessing course materials through their cell phones, or even worse, to compose entire research papers that way. Even when students have the hardware and software they need, navigating can still be a challenge. Many of his students do not know how to submit documents through a learning management system, or how to review feedback on assignments. He spends a lot of time helping them navigate the technology. However, he's taken steps to structure his course with those challenges in mind.

Solutions: *Leaned into flexible options, bite-sized course material, and the personal touch*

Hurd focused on building more flexibility for students into his courses this fall. Historically, he only gave students a window of two or three days for major assessments and exams. Now he gives a week, recognizing that proctoring software can present a challenge for some students. He has built in a lot of extra-credit opportunities, even though usually does not. To ensure students knew what was expected and when, Hurd created a quiz on the syllabus, which gave students an easy way to earn an initial good grade—and more importantly, ensured they were clear on the course objectives and requirements.

He has also taken a more flexible approach with his own teaching and the structure for the course, constantly assessing what is working and what is not. ***“I am willing to go back to the drawing board,”*** he says, ***“which I do not usually do until the end of the semester.”*** To support that process, Hurd has been more intentional about breaking course material down into smaller bites and giving students an example of how they play out in real life. ***“It is important to have tangible ways for students to look at the topic outside of the text.”***

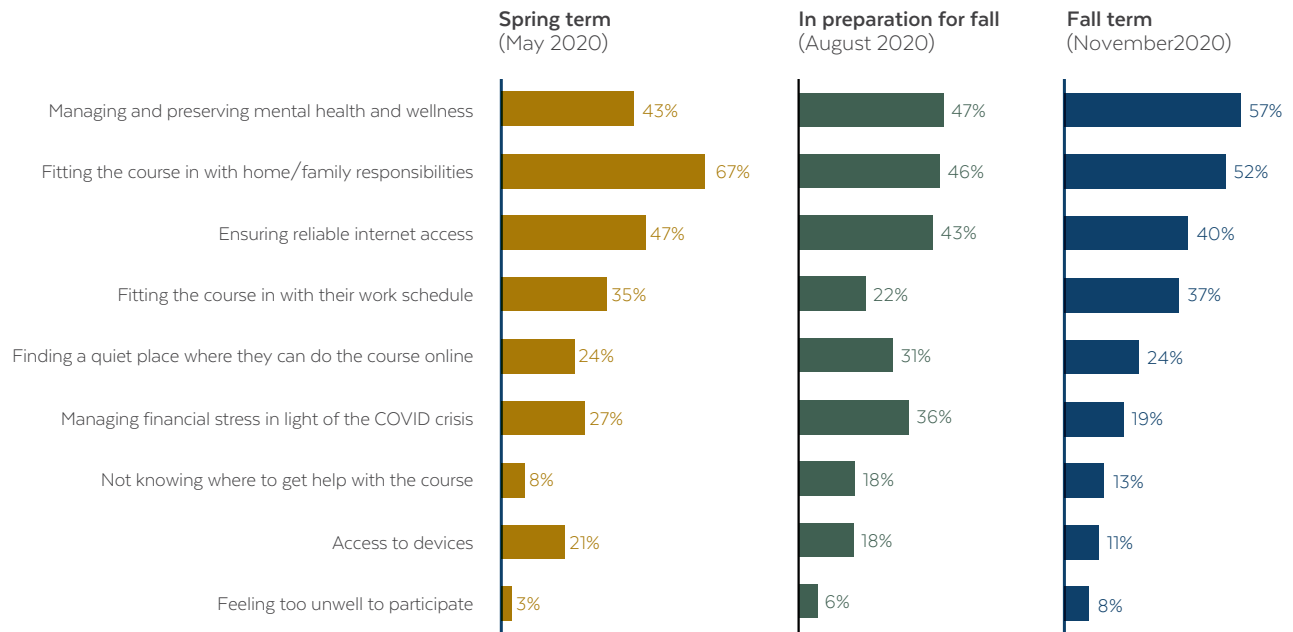
He has also leaned into being personally available to students. He has a dedicated Google voice number for students call or text. Students often just have a quick question about something they are struggling with. Getting the answer in the moment can make the difference between completing an important assignment or not.

Going forward: *Finding more efficiencies*

When it comes to his own teaching practice, Hurd will be looking for more efficiencies. He has begun cataloguing common feedback he provides on discussion board posts to create what he calls a “feedback rolodex” that he can pull from over and over. But he believes students are looking to hear directly from their faculty, especially if they are struggling. ***“There’s a danger with everything being automated,”*** he says. ***“Students are looking for tangible interaction with their faculty.”***

When asked to choose up to three challenges that they see facing students, faculty named “managing mental wellness”, “balancing school and family responsibilities”, and “ensuring reliable internet access” as top factors in all three surveys, and concern about student mental health rose 14 percentage points between the first and last surveys. In the fall, 2-year faculty continued to be less likely than 4-year faculty to cite managing student mental health (44% vs. 64%) as a concern but were more likely to cite fitting the course in with home and family responsibilities (65% vs. 44%) and fitting the course in with their work schedules (51% vs. 29%).

TOP STUDENT CHALLENGES PERCEIVED BY FACULTY



May survey question: “What do you think has been most challenging for students during the transition to remote education? Please choose up to three.”; August survey question: “What do you think will be most challenging for students this fall? Please choose up to three.”; November survey question: “What do you think was most challenging for students in your highest-enrollment course this fall? Please choose up to three.” N=852

FACULTY STORY: ENLISTING TIME MANAGEMENT TOOLS TO BOLSTER STUDENT SUCCESS



Lakshmy Sivaratnam, *Professor, Accounting*
Kansas City Kansas Community College

Faculty at Lakshmy Sivaratnam's college gave students more leeway last spring when COVID arrived and classes suddenly moved online. **"But this fall,"** she says, **"the expectation was that everyone has had a chance to reorganize their life and knows what to expect."** However, students are still struggling with competing demands, and time management remains a major challenge.

Solutions: *Monitored how students are using their time and focused on approaches to boost comprehension*

To help students with time management, Sivaratnam keeps her classes very structured. Her discipline, accounting, dictates that students understand the foundational material before moving on, so it is critical that students keep up with the work. On the other hand, Sivaratnam recognizes that students have different learning styles and thus need different ways to demonstrate that they are keeping up. She expects students to keep their cameras on if they are attending class, but she recognizes that many people will not feel comfortable speaking up. So, she also provides opportunity for engagement through office hours and discussion boards, asking for a weekly post.

Sivaratnam monitors student progress closely and pays attention to their activity on McGraw-Hill Connect, the courseware tool she uses in her course. She is not just looking for whether they attempted or completed assignments but when they started. Many students who end up doing poorly simply do not start their work early enough. When Sivaratnam notices that happening, she reaches out to students to let them know they need to start earlier and plan out their time more effectively.

She has also refined her approach to teaching remotely. In the spring, she was simply displaying slides with her class notes and talking students through them, but she found that comprehension improved when she wrote alongside her lecture, as she would in class. In the fall term, she created templates that she typed in during class, rather than displaying static slides.

Going forward: *Helping students plan for success*

Going forward, she plans to require students to submit a time management plan at the beginning of the term. They will write out a week's schedule and how they are going to manage their time. **"Drawing up a schedule helps students figure out if they are way overloaded,"** she says. Historically, she has only ever required the exercise from students who have already fallen behind and are asking for extensions on assignments. Now, she will ask for it preemptively from all her students.

While Sivaratnam has a plan to address this in her course, she sees a need for similar advising throughout her college. Too many students simply do not understand what course load they can handle under any circumstances, but especially online and during a pandemic.



INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT

This fall, 89% of those who reported sufficient professional development felt prepared to teach compared to 36% of those who did not have sufficient professional development – pointing to the stark and important role of infrastructure and support broadly and professional development specifically.

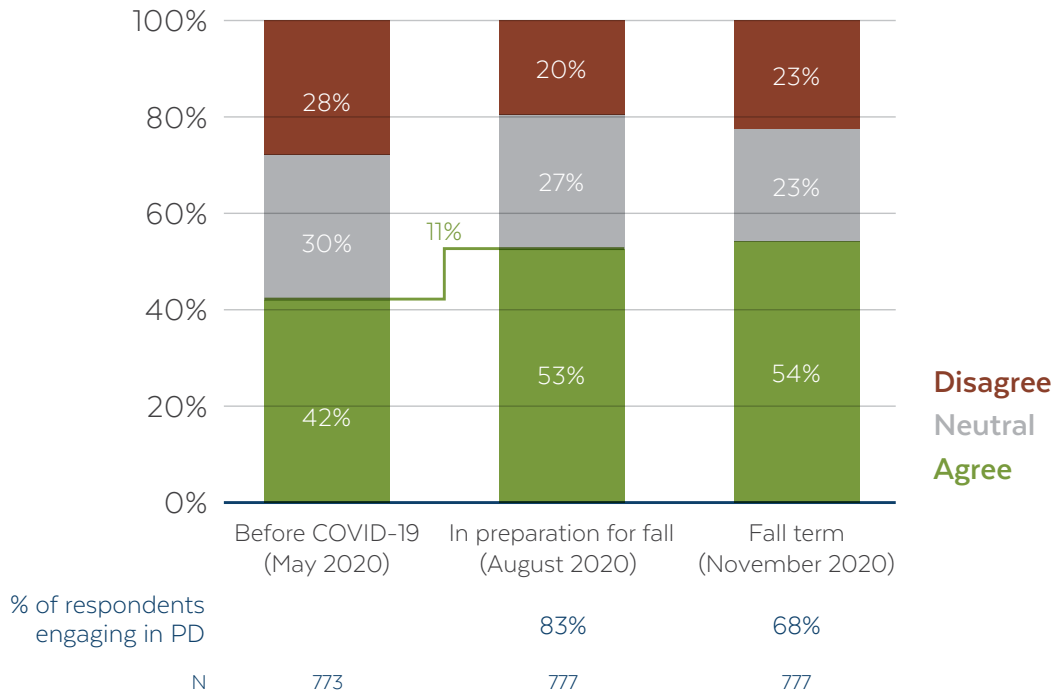
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

At institutions where faculty reported professional development was...



At the start of the pandemic, institutions and the broader higher education community rapidly ramped up faculty support services. Between our May and August surveys, the percentage of introductory faculty reporting sufficient training for teaching online climbed from 42% to 53%. Over the summer months, 80% of faculty participated in some form of professional development for digital learning.

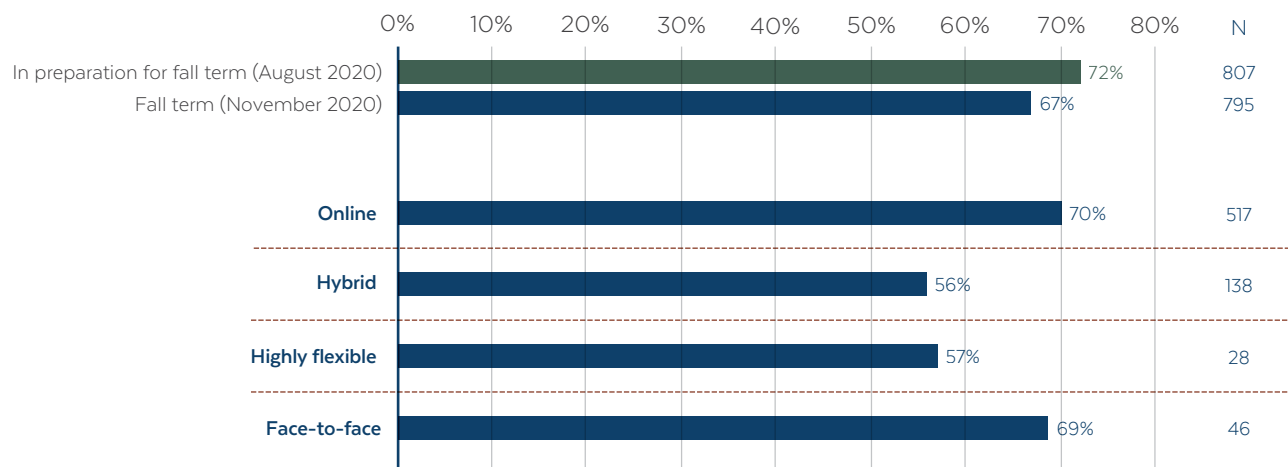
“MY INSTITUTION HAS PROVIDED SUFFICIENT TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHING ONLINE”



May survey question: “Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, how would you characterize your agreement with the following statements [My institution has provided sufficient training and professional development for teaching online]?”; August survey question: “As you consider the coming fall term, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [My institution has provided sufficient training and professional development for teaching online]?”; November survey question: “How would you characterize your agreement with the following statement [My institution has provided sufficient training and professional development for teaching online]?”

However, these measures did not reach all faculty; in November, only 67% of instructors reported that they considered themselves prepared to deliver a high-quality course, a decline of 5 percentage points since August. Those teaching in hybrid or highly flexible formats felt least prepared. Numbers fell slightly across all delivery method categories from August to November indicating that as the term got underway, faculty faced a more challenging term and were less prepared than they thought.

“I AM (WAS) PREPARED TO DELIVER A HIGH-QUALITY COURSE TO MY STUDENTS THIS FALL”



August survey question: “As you consider the coming fall term, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [I am prepared to deliver a high-quality course to my students this fall]?”; November survey question: “How would you characterize your agreement with the following statements [I was prepared to deliver a high-quality course to my students this fall]?”

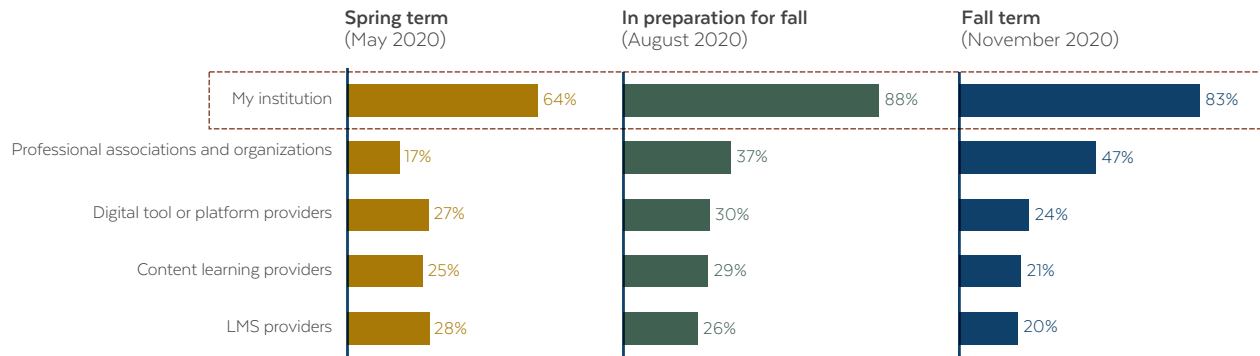


“In-person is relatively easy. Online is relatively easy. Hybrid is a whole lot more work and I am concerned about keeping up.”

- Instructor teaching introductory biology courses, 4-year institution

Institutions themselves continue to be the largest provider of professional development by far, with 83% of instructors citing their own college or university as one of their sources of training. However, faculty report turning to professional associations and organizations at nearly three times pre-COVID rates. Between May and November, the number of respondents accessing training from professional associations and organizations rose from 17% to 47%. During the same period, the proportion of faculty accessing training from digital tool, platform, content, or LMS vendors decreased.

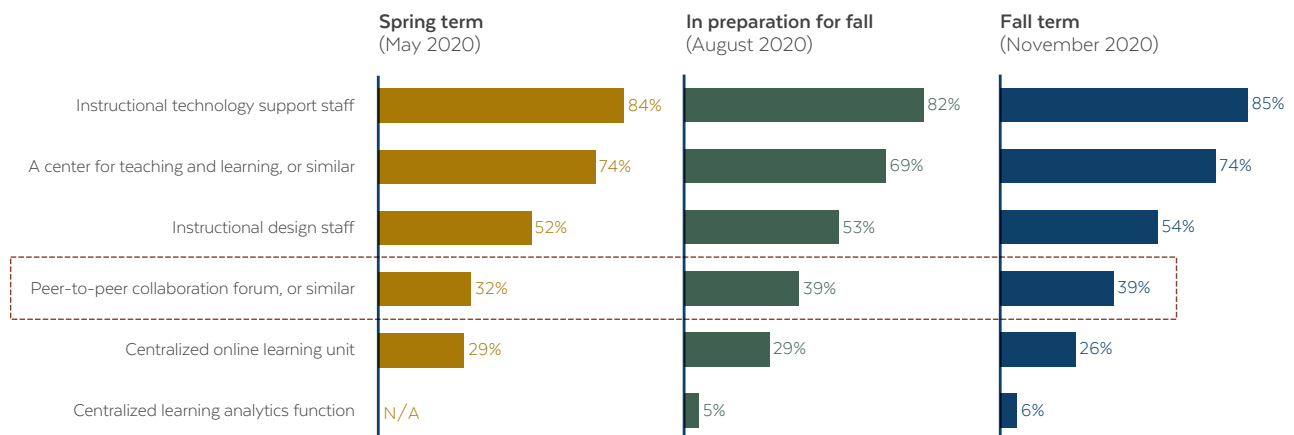
ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH FACULTY RECEIVED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING



May survey question: "Which of the following organizations or systems were most helpful to you as you transitioned your courses to remote? Please select all that apply." N = 852; August survey question: "Which of the following organizations have you received professional development from as you have prepared to teach this fall? Please select all that apply." N = 703; November survey question: "Which of the following organizations have you received professional development from during the fall term? Please select all that apply." N = 580

Available resources vary across institutions. Most common are instructional technology support staff, available to 85% of respondents; a center for teaching and learning, available to 74%; and instructional design staff, available to 54%. Peer-to-peer collaboration forums expanded notably from the spring - from 32% to 39% of faculty reporting them available. Some of this variability is, of course, simply due to institution size; for instance, faculty at institutions with more than 20,000 students are more likely to report the availability of a center for teaching and learning than those institutions with fewer students (80% vs. 72%). Infrastructure and availability of resources matters. Instructors who felt prepared to deliver a high-quality course in the fall were much more likely than those who did not to report the availability of peer-to-peer collaboration forums (41% vs. 32%) and instructional design staff (57% vs. 47%).

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO FACULTY

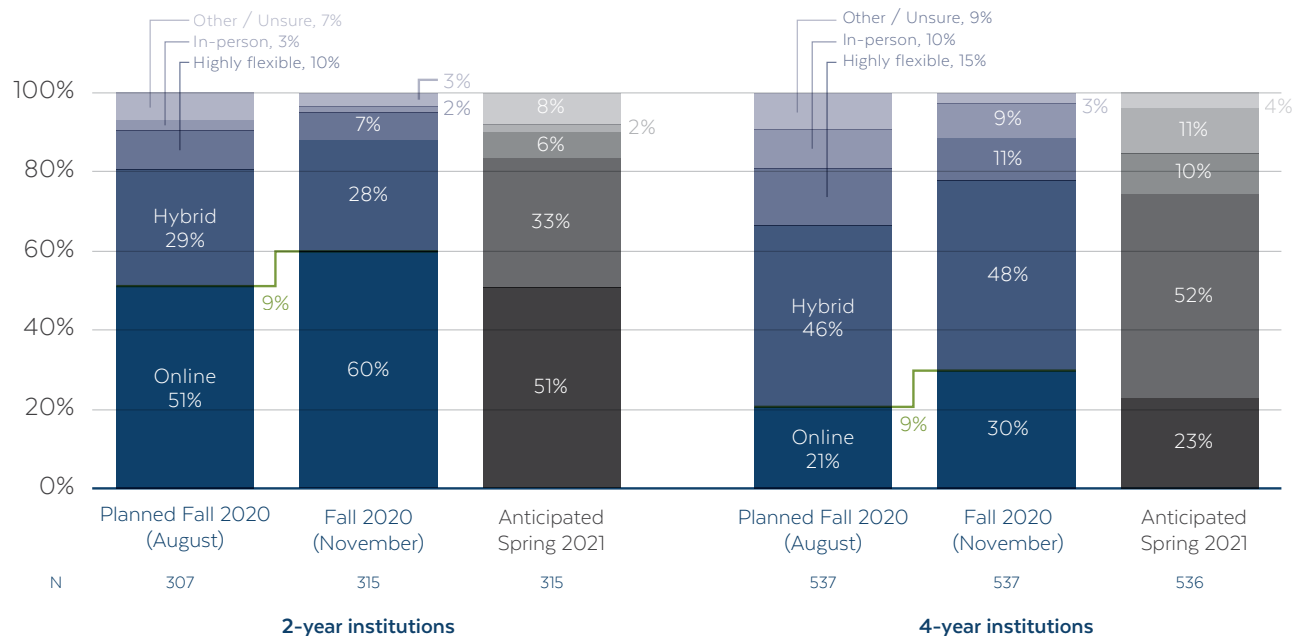


Survey question: "Which of the following institutional resources, if any, are available to you at your institution? Please select all that apply." May N = 852, August N = 851, November N = 832

HOW FACULTY “GRADE” THEIR INSTITUTIONS

More institutions had a fully online fall term than anticipated, with many schools that had anticipated face-to-face classes pivoting to online or hybrid formats in late summer. Our August survey found that 51% of 2-year faculty reported their institutions were planning for a primarily online fall, but in November, 60% of the same group reported an online modality for their institution; for faculty at 4-year institutions, the percentages were 21% and 30% respectively. 2-year institutions were twice as likely to be online compared to 4-year institutions. 4-year institutions were far more likely to employ a hybrid modality in the fall than 2-year institutions, 48% to 28% respectively. Both trends are expected to persist into the next term; as of late November, 51% of 2-year institution faculty anticipate an online spring term and 33% anticipate hybrid. At 4-year institutions 23% of faculty report their institution will be primarily online and 52% report hybrid.

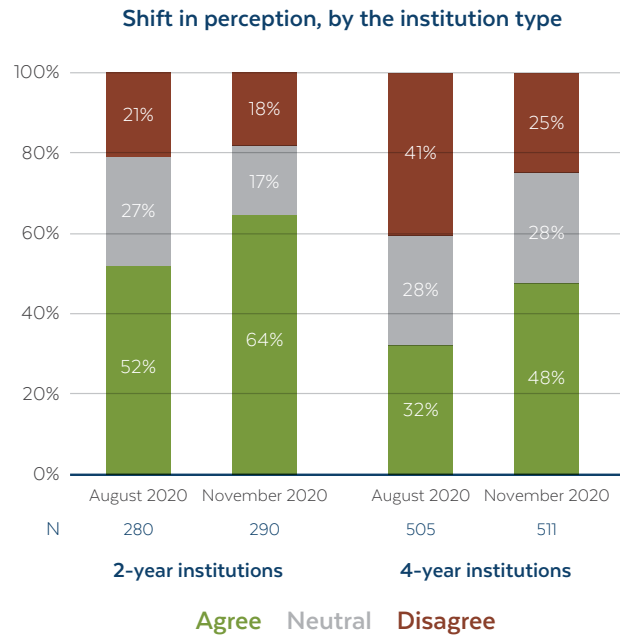
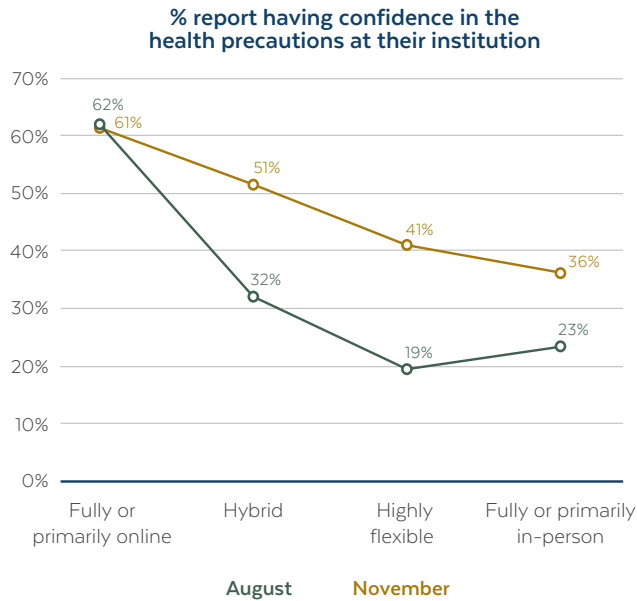
PLANNED AND ACTUAL INSTITUTIONAL DELIVERY MODALITY FOR FALL 2020



August survey question: “As of today, which of the following best describes your institution’s planned modality for the fall term?”; November survey question: “Which of the following best describes your institution’s primary teaching modality for the fall term? If your institution is employing more than one, please choose the answer closest to the primary modality.” “As of today, what is your institution planning for the spring term?”

When asked to rate institutional health precautions, faculty at 2-year institutions were more confident than their 4-year institution peers in their school’s COVID-19 prevention measures. Modality matters: faculty who report their school’s planned primary mode of instruction as online are much more likely to say they have confidence in health precautions (61%) than faculty teaching at institutions where in-person learning is the primary delivery mode (36%).

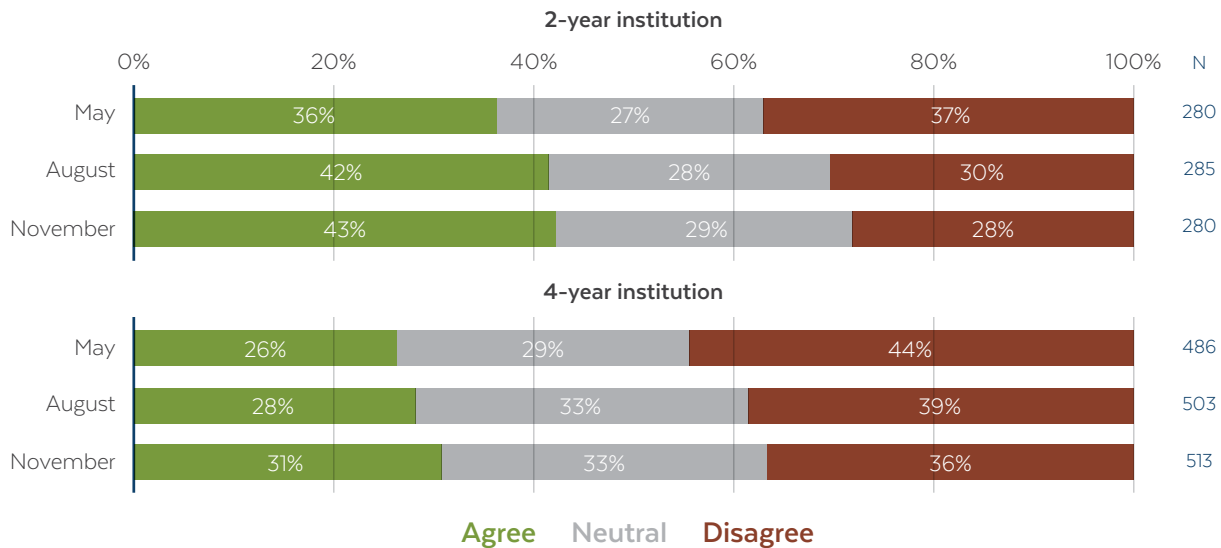
“I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE COVID-19 HEALTH PRECAUTIONS IN PLACE AT MY INSTITUTION”



August and November survey question: “As of today, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [I have confidence in the health precautions at my institution]?”

Faculty report the same levels of anxiety and optimism about their institution’s financial health as they did in August. At both 4-year and 2-year institutions, instructors are more optimistic than they were in May, when anxiety was at its highest, although the increases are not dramatic—7 percentage points, from 36% to 43% for those at 2-year institutions, and 5 percentage points, from 26% to 31%, for those at 4-year institutions. Faculty at 2-year institutions are more confident than their 4-year peers. It is notable and concerning that only 1/3 of faculty at 4-year institutions report confidence in their institutions financial health.

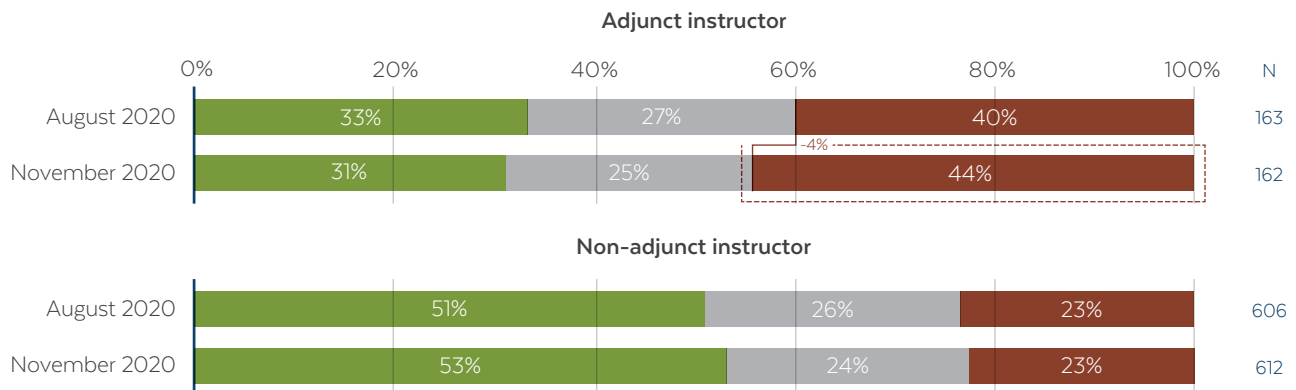
“I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN MY INSTITUTION’S FINANCIAL HEALTH”



May question: “As you consider the coming Fall term, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [I have confidence in the financial health of my institution]?”; August and November question: “As of today, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [I have confidence in the financial health of my institution]?”

When it comes to personal job security, there are stark contrasts based on faculty status. Adjunct faculty are far more concerned about their job security than non-adjuncts, and the proportion of adjuncts expressing a lack of confidence in their job security has increased slightly since our August survey, from 40% to 44%. The proportion of non-adjuncts reporting job security concerns has remained stable at 23%.

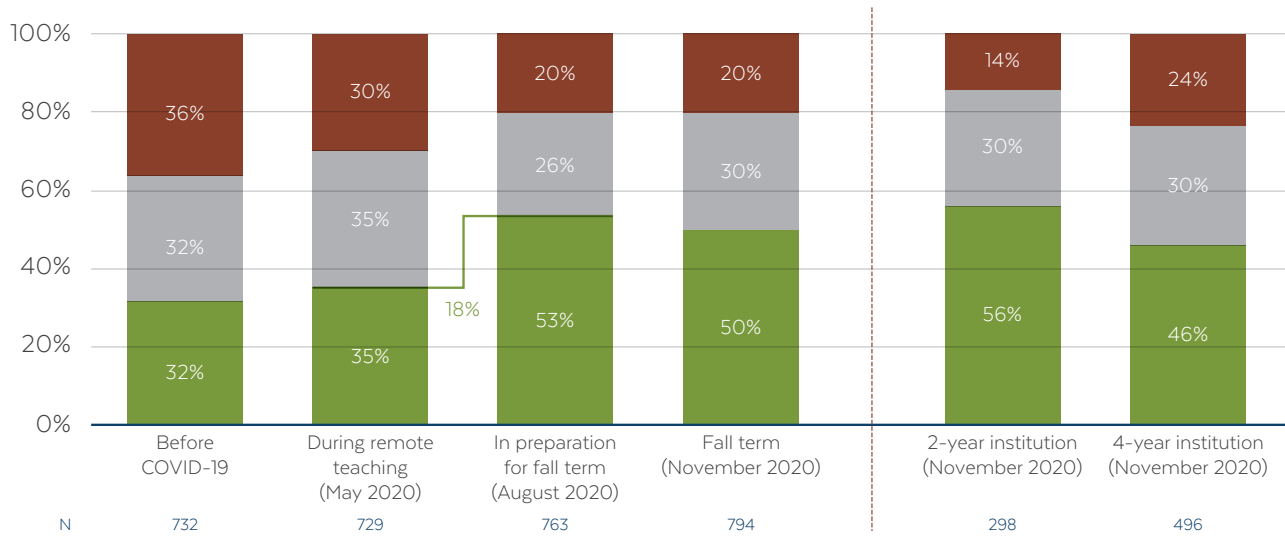
“I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT MY JOB IS SECURE”



August and November survey question: “As of today, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [I have confidence that my job is secure]?” N = 813

Between May and August, introductory faculty reported significant positive momentum in their institutions digital learning environment; in November, the number agreeing that their institution had achieved an “ideal digital learning environment” remained essentially stable at 50%, with 30% expressing neutrality. Faculty at 2-year institutions were more likely to grade their institutions positively than faculty at 4-year institutions, 56% vs. 46%. The pandemic has prompted institutions to elevate their focus on and support for digital learning, and the impact is measurable and felt by faculty.

“MY INSTITUTION IS ACHIEVING AN IDEAL DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT”



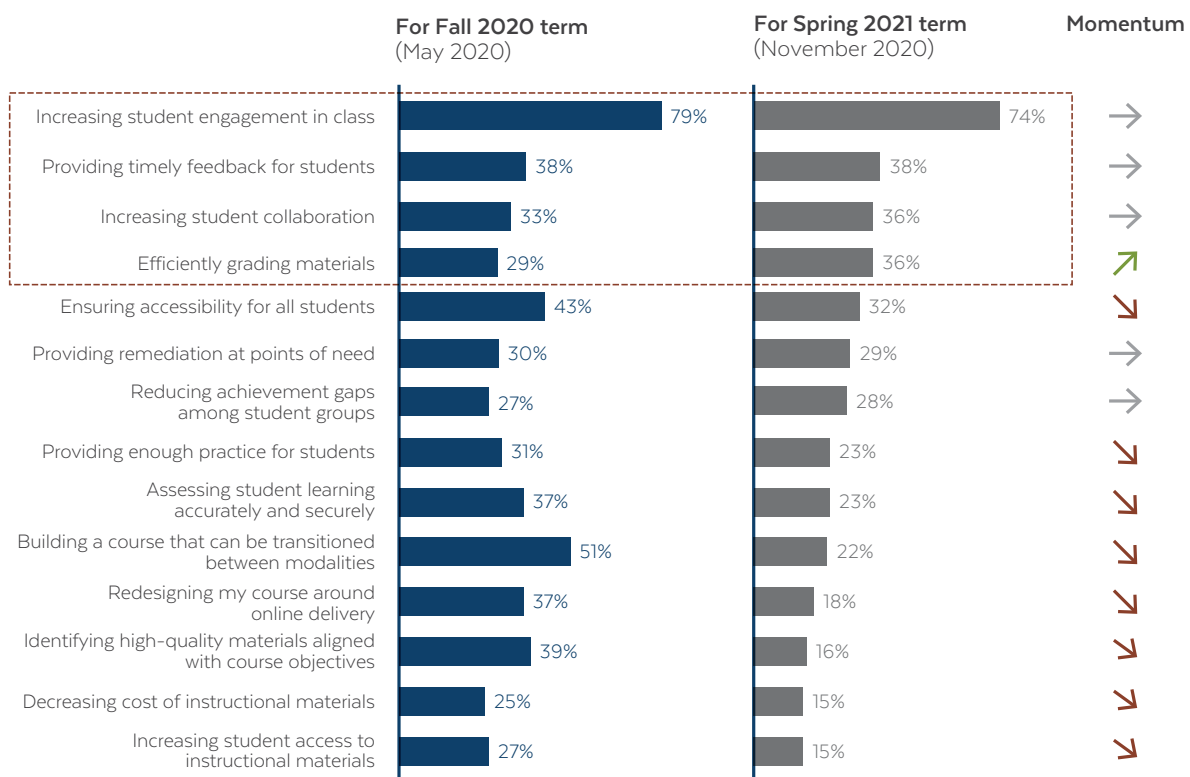
Before COVID-19 survey question: “Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [my institution is achieving an ideal digital learning environment]?”; May survey question: “As you consider the coming Fall term, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [my institution is achieving an ideal digital learning environment]?”; August and November survey question: “As of now, how would you characterize your agreement with the statement [my institution is achieving an ideal digital learning environment]?”

Note: For our full survey population, belief that their institution is achieving an ideal digital learning environment increased from 28% of the population pre-COVID to 49% during the summer and into the fall. This information was collected from a representative sample of individuals but not from the same individuals over each time point.

OUR WORK AHEAD

As faculty look ahead to the spring term and beyond, they note that student engagement and collaboration will remain priorities as focus has shifted away from identifying and redesigning course materials. In November, 74% of faculty listed the improvement of student engagement in class as by far their top priority moving forward, followed by the provision of timely feedback to students (38%) and the expansion of student collaboration (36%). Grading was identified as a challenge in early days of the transition to remote learning and continues to increase as a priority (36%). Assessing student learning and ensuring accessibility both declined sharply in importance over the course of the year as faculty have increasingly worked to address these challenges.

FACULTY PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING TERM



May survey question: "In planning for the fall term, what are your biggest instructional priorities? Please select all that apply." N = 852;
 November survey question: "As you look forward to the upcoming spring term, what are your biggest instructional priorities for your highest enrollment course? Please select all that apply." N = 836

There is a light at the end of the tunnel with regard to the pandemic, but introductory faculty, their students, and institutions face steep obstacles on the route back to normalcy. Measures to retain students early in their college careers will be all the more vital given COVID-era enrollment declines: according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, overall undergraduate enrollment in fall 2020 decreased 3.6% from 2019, and enrollments in 2-year public institutions fell 10.1%. Across all institutions, enrollment of first-time students declined 13.1%, an unprecedented drop.⁷ Current high school students who in previous years would be entering the postsecondary education pipeline are delaying the decision, if not giving up altogether: the number of students completing a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) during 2020 decreased 12.3% from the previous year.⁸ Early data indicate that poverty-affected and underrepresented minority students will be hit the hardest, with around 40% of Black and Latinx households in an October survey reporting that a resident community college student had cancelled enrollment.⁹

Through our annual Time for Class surveys, Tyton Partners will continue to monitor the faculty experience with a view to both assessing and informing decisions on digital learning, course design, student success, and the future of learning. However, it bears emphasizing that many of the critical issues we have investigated over the past year will need to be addressed not by faculty alone, but by institutions and policy-makers. Although they too are under multiple stresses from the pandemic's upheaval, colleges and universities in the near term must do all they can to sustain high-quality online and hybrid course delivery, just as after the pandemic they will need to quickly and efficiently manage the transition back to in-person classes while preserving the benefits of high-quality digital learning practices, restore enrollments, and boost student retention. In the long term, higher education institutions should marshal resources across policy, practice, and infrastructure in order to build capacity to address and close equity gaps exacerbated by the pandemic.

7. National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. (2020, December 17). *Current Term Enrollment Estimates: Fall 2020*. National Student Clearinghouse, Herndon, VA. https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/CTEE_Report_Fall_2020.pdf.

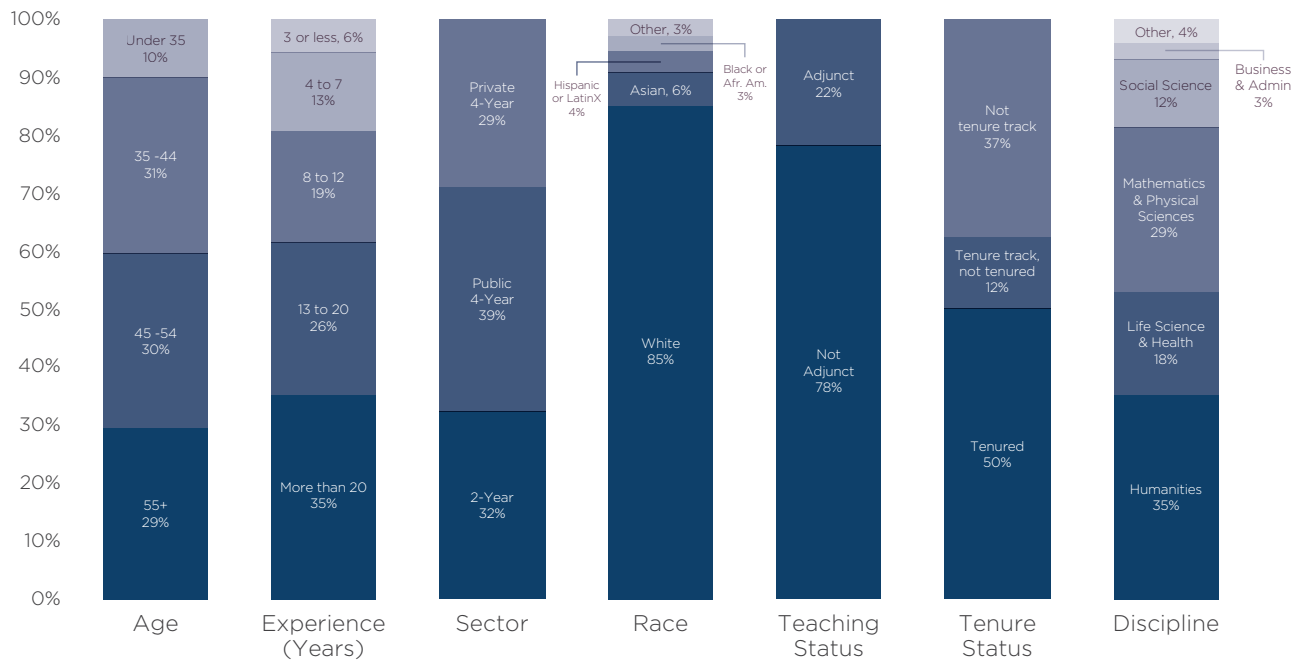
8. National College Attainment Network. (2020, December 25). *Form Your Future: FAFSA Tracker*. <https://formyourfuture.org/fafsa-tracker>

9. St. Amour, M. (2020, December 10). Low-income community college students most likely to cancel plans. *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/12/10/analysis-low-income-community-college-students-most-likely-report-canceling-college>

APPENDIX

DEMOGRAPHICS

OVERVIEW OF INTRODUCTORY FACULTY PANEL



METHODOLOGY

The survey questionnaire was pretested November 16, 2020, and field work was conducted November 17 through 22, 2020. Invitations were sent to over 92,000 faculty, deans, and department chairs at 2-year and 4-year institutions. The survey was primarily designed to include perspectives from faculty who taught at least one course during the fall term of 2020. A round of email reminders were sent to achieve a nationally representative set of responses, and \$10 gift cards were distributed as incentives to the first 100 respondents of the survey.

The institutional composition after quality control was in line with national data distribution from the National Center for Education Statistics (2019), so no weighting was applied to the data. Given the impact of high-enrollment introductory courses on student progression and success, faculty teaching those courses were oversampled by design.

Based on the full response set, the margin of error is +/- 1.63% for questions asked of the full faculty sample. Questions that were addressed to a smaller subset because of skip logic have wider margins of error. Generally, subgroups with samples smaller than 30 responses were discounted. The panel of 852 faculty who answered the three surveys had a slightly more positive sentiment towards online learning¹⁰ prior to COVID-19 when compared to the non-panel sample, based on survey data from spring 2020. The bias was identified and examined—faculty with no experience with online learning prior to COVID-19 were more likely to report negative sentiment towards online learning prior to COVID-19, and 85% of the faculty panel reported experience with online learning, compared to 77% for the non-panel sample. This bias did not change the pattern of responses across survey administrations, and the magnitude of impact was limited.

10. Indicated by the response to question "Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, how would you characterize your agreement with the following statements? [Online learning is an effective method for teaching]"

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report and its findings were made possible by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the foundation.

This work would also not be possible without the partnership and input of the *Association of Public Land-grant Universities* (APLU), *Achieving the Dream* (ATD), the *Association of Chief Academic Officers* (ACAO), *Digital Promise* and *Every Learner Everywhere* (ELE). We also thank *Bay View Analytics* and *New America* for being reviewers and collaborators. Thank you to Elyse Ashburn for leading focus groups and her effective story-telling. Thank you to Joan Powell for her writing support and to the team at *Can of Creative* for thoughtful and creative design.

Most importantly, thank you to the faculty who generously shared and continue to share their experiences and insights to shape the future of teaching and learning. We are especially grateful to the faculty who were willing to share their stories and experience via online focus groups and interviews. We are grateful for your ongoing commitment to teaching and to your students.

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TO REFERENCE THIS WORK, PLEASE CITE:

Fox, K., Bryant, G., Lin, N., Khedkar, N., Nguyen, A., (2021, January 28). *Time for Class - COVID-19 Edition Part 3: The Impact of 2020 on Postsecondary Teaching and Learning of Introductory Faculty*. Tyton Partners